



LOS ANGELES COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

510 S. Vermont Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90020-1975. (213) 738-2981. <http://openspacedistrict.lacounty.info>

October 08, 2013

The Honorable Board of Directors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Directors:

**ALLOCATE COMPETITIVE EXCESS FUNDS AVAILABLE
TO THE FIRST SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT;
AUTHORIZE AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION OF EXCESS FUNDS GRANTS FOR THE FIRST
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT TREE PLANTING PROGRAM; AND AUTHORIZE ADVANCE OF
FUNDS UNDER SPECIFIED CONDITIONS TO THE WATERSHED CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS
(FIRST DISTRICT) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$1,967,279 in Competitive Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District pursuant to the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 for tree planting grants to various cities and non-profit organizations, and will allow advance payment of grant funds to the Watershed Conservation Authority under specified conditions for the San Gabriel River Trail Enhancement, San Gabriel River Bike Trail Gateway Enhancement, Parque Dos Rios, and Tree Planting Enhancement along the San Gabriel River Projects.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Find that the proposed Tree Planting projects for the cities of Baldwin Park, El Monte, Huntington Park, Monterey Park, Pomona, Rosemead, Walnut, West Covina and Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Amigos de los Rios, North East Trees, and Watershed Conservation Authority, and the San Gabriel River Trail Enhancement Project, Parque Dos Rios Project and San Gabriel River Bike Trail Gateway Enhancement Project are categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act and for the reasons stated herein and the reasons reflected in the record of the Projects.
2. Allocate \$1,967,279 of Competitive Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District for

tree planting grants as follows:

- a. City of Baldwin Park - \$100,000
- b. City of El Monte - \$188,700
- c. City of Huntington Park - \$55,307
- d. City of Monterey Park - \$86,554
- e. City of Pomona - \$60,000
- f. City of Rosemead - \$200,000
- g. City of Walnut - \$91,900
- h. City of West Covina - \$60,000
- i. Los Angeles Conservation Corps - \$400,000
- j. Amigos de los Rios - \$324,820
- k. North East Trees - \$299,998
- l. Watershed Conservation Authority - \$100,000

3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation, in his capacity as Director of the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District, to award grants to the various grantees, in the total amount of \$1,967,279, for various tree planting grants, when applicable conditions have been met, and to administer the grants as of the date of award and pursuant to guidelines in the Procedural Guide for Specified, Per Parcel, and Excess Funds Projects, otherwise funds shall remain in the Excess Funds account.

4. Authorize that the \$1,500,000 of Specified Funds and \$231,477 in County Excess Funds previously allocated by your Board on March 9, 2010, November 8, 2007, and April 20, 2010, respectively, as well as the \$100,000 in Competitive Excess Funds recommended for allocation herein, be advanced to the Watershed Conservation Authority on the conditions that those funds and any interest thereon be used for the projects listed, and that any documentation normally required for reimbursement will be required prior to any expenditure of the advanced funds being approved by the Regional Park and Open Space District.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approval of the recommended actions will allocate \$1,967,279 in Competitive Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District pursuant to the Safe Neighborhood Parks Proposition of 1996 (1996 Proposition), for the following tree planting projects:

- City of Baldwin Park for its \$100,000 Citywide Parkway Tree Planting Project;
- City of El Monte totaling \$188,700, with \$99,000 for the El Monte Parks & Facilities Tree Planting Grant Project and \$89,700 for the Valley Boulevard Downtown Core Tree Planting Project;
- City of Huntington Park for its \$55,307 Trees for a Better Environment Project;
- City of Monterey Park for its \$86,554 Tree Planting in Monterey Park Project;
- City of Pomona for its \$60,000 Garey Avenue Tree Planting Project;
- City of Rosemead totaling \$200,000, with \$100,000 each for the Jay Imperial Park Project and the Rosemead Tree Planting and Beautification Project;
- City of Walnut for its \$91,900 Walnut Youth Conservation Corp Tree Planting Program Project;
- City of West Covina for its \$60,000 West Covina City Parks Tree Planting Revitalization Project;
- Los Angeles Conservation Corps (LACC) totaling \$400,000, with \$100,000 each for the East Los Angeles Parkway Tree Planting Phase I Project, the East Los Angeles Parkway Tree Planting Phase II Project, the Unincorporated Azusa/La Puente/Valinda Area Tree Planting Project, and the Parkway Trees in La Puente Project;

- Amigos de los Rios (ADLR) totaling \$324,820, with \$99,960 for the Emerald Necklace Coalition Cities Tree Planting Project, \$99,940 for the San Gabriel Valley Schools Tree Planting Project, \$25,000 for the Thienes Avenue Tree Planting Project, and \$99,920 for the South Gate Parks Tree Planting Project;
- North East Trees (NET) totaling \$299,998, with \$99,999 for the Ascot Hills Park Project, \$99,999 for the Debs/Rose Hills Park Project, and \$100,000 Soto Street Greenbelt Project, and
- Watershed Conservation Authority for its \$100,000 Tree Planting Enhancement Project along the San Gabriel River Project.

It is also recommended that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (Director) be authorized to award the grants to the various grantees, when applicable conditions have been met, such as grantee qualifications, consistency between the projects and requirements of the 1996 Proposition, and grantee agreements to follow California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for the projects, if applicable, and to administer the grants pursuant to the Procedural Guide previously approved by your Board.

On April 1, 2003, your Board, acting in its capacity as the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, authorized formation of the Watershed Conservation Authority (WCA) a joint powers authority whose members are the Los Angeles County Flood Control District and the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy of the State of California. The recommended actions allow the Los Angeles County Regional Park and Open Space District (RPOSD) to disburse grant funds on an advance basis and thereby enable WCA to commence pre-construction, construction, and completion activities on the following RPOSD grant-funded projects:

- San Gabriel River Trail Enhancement Project - \$147,477 in County Excess Funds allocated by your Board on November 8, 2007
- Parque Dos Rios Project - \$1,500,000 in 1996 Proposition Specified Funds re-allocated by your Board on March 9, 2010
- San Gabriel River Bike Trail Gateway Enhancement Project – \$84,000 in County Excess Funds allocated by your Board on April 20, 2010
- Tree Planting Enhancement along the San Gabriel River Project - \$100,000 in Competitive Excess Funds recommended for allocation herein

WCA will maintain the advanced funds in an account separate from any other funds, and will provide RPOSD with quarterly status reports including a detailed description of all activity on the account. The advanced funds and any interest thereon will be used for the above-listed projects, and all documentation normally required for reimbursement will be required before RPOSD will approve any expenditure of the advanced funds.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The proposed recommendations further the Board approved County Strategic Plan Goals of Operational Effectiveness (Goal 1) by enhancing the environment through tree planting in parkways and public spaces in the First Supervisorial District.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

Sufficient appropriation for the grants, in the amount of \$1,967,279, is budgeted in the First Supervisorial District's portion of RPOSD's Excess Funds Project Fund, HD6. The \$1,731,477 to be advanced to WCA is budgeted in the appropriate RPOSD Project Fund as well.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The 1996 Proposition requires that agencies to which funds were allocated under the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996 encumber all such funds prior to receiving grants of Excess Funds. The various grantees meet this requirement.

The 1996 Proposition provides a method for determining each fiscal year the amount of funds available in the following fiscal year to fund capital improvement projects in addition to the amounts specifically identified for projects in the Safe Neighborhood Parks Propositions of 1992 and 1996. The recommended grants would be funded from the Excess Funds available to the First Supervisorial District from Excess Funds for competitively-awarded projects.

The Board may establish additional conditions on grants of Excess Funds. The Director of the Department would be authorized to award grants to the various grantees when all applicable conditions have been met. Any funds allocated by the Board, but not encumbered by award of a grant contract in the same fiscal year, shall be available for allocation by the Board in the following fiscal year.

On June 2, 2009, your Board approved the Procedural Guide, for governing the administration of District grants. The Procedural Guide will appropriately govern the administration of the recommended additional grants as well.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

All projects funded by RPOSD are required to comply with the CEQA as a condition of the grant. The lead agency is responsible for preparing the appropriate environmental documentation for the project. The cities of Baldwin Park, El Monte, Huntington Park, Monterey Park, Pomona, Rosemead, Walnut, and West Covina are the lead agencies for their respective tree planting projects. RPOSD is the lead agency for the projects by Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Amigos de los Rios, and North East Trees. The Watershed Conservation Authority is the lead agency for the Tree Planting Enhancement along the San Gabriel River Project.

The proposed Tree Planting projects are categorically exempt from CEQA. The projects, which consist of planting trees, are within certain classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment in that they meet the criteria set forth in Section 15304 (b) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Class 4 (c) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the projects involve new landscaping.

The Watershed Conservation Authority is also the lead agency for another group of projects which consist of the following: San Gabriel River Trail Enhancement Project, Parque Dos Rios Project, and San Gabriel River Bike Trail Gateway Enhancement Project.

The proposed San Gabriel River Trail Enhancement Project is categorically exempt from CEQA. The project, which consists of the development of a pocket park and trail access to passive recreation areas at the Duck Farm as well as access to a newly developed river promenade on the east bank of the San Gabriel River, is within certain classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment in that it meets the criteria set forth in Sections 15303 (e) and 15304 of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 3 (b) and 4 of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the project involves installation of small new structures and minor alterations to land.

The proposed Parque Dos Rios Project is categorically exempt from CEQA. The project consists of the development of a 7.8 acre site along the lower Los Angeles River in the City of South Gate. Amenities will include picnic tables, shade structures, viewing areas, shade trees, drinking fountains, a bike rack, interpretive signage, new native vegetation and irrigation with a low volume water conservation system. These amenities are within certain classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment in that they meet the criteria set forth in Sections 15303 (e) and 15304 (b) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 3 (b) and 4 (c) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the project involves installation of small new structures and new landscaping.

The proposed San Gabriel River Bike Trail Gateway Enhancement Project is categorically exempt from CEQA. The project, which consists of an approximately 15,000 square foot enhancement, including site preparation, landscaping, an art installation, and a monument sign to increase visibility to the San Gabriel River trail connection and to enhance trail user safety at the Arrow Highway crossing, is within certain classes of projects that have been determined not to have a significant effect on the environment in that it meets the criteria set forth in Sections 15303 (e) and 15304 (b) of the State CEQA Guidelines and Classes 3 (b) and 4 (c) of the County's Environmental Document Reporting Procedures and Guidelines, Appendix G, because the project involves installation of small new structures and new landscaping.

The proposed projects above include no expansion of an existing use, and will not involve the removal of healthy, mature trees. Additionally, the proposed projects are not in a sensitive environment, and there are no cumulative impacts, unusual circumstances, or other limiting factors that would make the exemption inapplicable based on the proposed projects' records.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

Grant Project Agreements will be entered into and administered under authority delegated to the Director and pursuant to the Procedural Guide approved by the Board in 2009 only if all applicable conditions of the grants have been met. The Project Agreements will be approved as to form by County Counsel.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

The recommended projects will enhance the environment through the tree planting in public spaces in the First Supervisorial District.

CONCLUSION

Please instruct the Executive Officer-Clerk of the Board to return one adopted copy of this action to the Chief Executive Office, Capital Projects Division, and to the Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

10/8/2013

Page 6

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Russ Guiney", with a stylized, flowing script.

RUSS GUINEY

Director

RG:JB

WRO:mpl

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors